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Groups of countries in special situations: Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Report of the preparatory meeting of experts for the high-level meeting on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

1. The preparatory meeting of experts for the high-level meeting on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 was convened at United Nations Headquarters from 5 to 7 September 2006. The Chairman, Johan L. Lovald (Norway), opened the meeting in accordance with the guidelines contained in paragraph 15 of the note by the Secretary-General on the proposed organization of the high-level meeting (A/60/738).

2. The other officers of the preparatory meeting were elected as follows:

Vice-Chair: Michel Kafando (Burkina Faso)

Vice-Chair: Andriy Nikitov (Ukraine)

Vice-Chair: Gabriel Salazar Pineda (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela)

Rapporteur: Raja Nushirwan Zainal Abidin (Malaysia)

3. The preparatory meeting had before it the following documentation:

(a) Note by the Secretary-General on the proposed organization of the high-level meeting (A/60/738);

(b) Letter dated 27 June 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Benin to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Cotonou Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 (A/61/117);

* A/61/150.

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(c) Note by the President of the General Assembly, containing a summary of the informal interactive hearings of the General Assembly with representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector (A/61/162);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the midterm comprehensive global review (A/61/173);

(e) Draft resolution A/61/L.1.

4. At its first meeting, on 5 September, the preparatory meeting adopted its agenda and organization of work. Three working groups, facilitated by the three vice-chairs, were established to undertake its substantive work, and an open-ended working group, facilitated by the Rapporteur, was established for the preparation of the outcome document of the high-level meeting.

5. At its concluding meeting, on 7 September, the preparatory meeting approved a draft resolution, entitled "Declaration of the high-level meeting of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010", for adoption by the General Assembly at its high-level meeting to be held on 18 and 19 September (see annex). As a result, draft resolution A/61/L.1 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

Annex

Draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly at its high-level meeting to be held on 18 and 19 September 2006

Declaration of the high-level meeting of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Preparatory Meeting of Experts[1] on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010[2] held in New York from 5 to 7 September 2006,

Noting with appreciation the contribution made by the least developed countries and their development partners, the United Nations system organizations and other intergovernmental organizations as well as the non-governmental organizations to the process of the midterm review of the Programme of Action,

[1] A/61/323.

[2] A/CONF.191/13, chap. II.

Adopts the following Declaration:

Declaration of the high-level meeting of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

We, Heads of State and Government and heads of delegations participating in the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly, on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, held on 18 and 19 September 2006,

1. *Recommit* ourselves to meeting the special needs of the least developed countries by making progress towards the goals of poverty eradication, peace and development through the improvement of the quality of lives of people in the least developed countries and the strengthening of their abilities to build a better future for themselves and develop their countries as committed to in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010;[2]

2. *Reaffirm* that the Programme of Action constitutes a fundamental framework for a strong global partnership to accelerate sustained economic growth, sustainable development and poverty eradication in the least developed countries;

3. *Reaffirm also* that the primary responsibility for development in the least developed countries rests with those countries themselves, but that their efforts need to be given concrete and substantial international support from Governments and international organizations in a spirit of shared responsibility through genuine partnerships, including with civil society and the private sector;

4. *Support* the smooth transition strategy developed for the graduation of countries from the list of least developed countries, and in this regard, affirm the need for the international community to render necessary support to graduating the least developed countries with a view to avoiding the disruption of their development projects and programmes and allowing them to continue developing;

5. *Stress* that the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, can be effectively achieved in the least developed countries through, in particular, the timely fulfilment of the seven commitments of the Programme of Action;

6. *Note* that the Programme of Action since its adoption has registered some progress in its implementation, while at the same time the overall socio-economic situation in the least developed countries continues to be precarious;

7. *Stress* that given current trends, many least developed countries are unlikely to achieve the goals and objectives set out in the Programme of Action;

8. *Emphasize*, however, that many least developed countries, with the support of their development partners, have made, despite many difficulties, notable achievements through wide-ranging and far-reaching reforms;

9. *Acknowledge* the significant efforts by development partners in the implementation of the Programme of Action. Acknowledge also that there is more to be done to implement the Programme of Action, in particular in the area of poverty

eradication. Recognize that the situation in the least developed countries requires continued attention;

10. *Recognize* that it is important to achieve the goals and targets of the Programme of Action in a timely manner and, in this regard, welcome the elaboration of the Cotonou Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010[3] as an initiative led and owned by least developed countries;

11. *Welcome* the measures taken by developed and developing countries as well as by multilateral organizations to promote South-South cooperation, and call on them to continue to enhance their resources and efforts for capacity-building and development in the least developed countries, including the sharing of best practices in the sustainable development of the least developed countries;

12. *Call upon* the international community and the United Nations system and agencies to continue to assist with the implementation of the Programme of Action, taking into account the conclusions of the midterm comprehensive global review;

13. *Invite* the Economic and Social Council to continue to ensure the annual review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, taking into account the concrete and quantifiable achievements made in the realization of the agreed objectives.

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[3] A/61/117, annex I.